United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea SPLOS/216

Meeting of States Parties

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Decision regarding the workload of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

The Meeting of States Parties,

Recalling the importance of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf ("the Commission") for coastal States and the international community as a whole,

Mindful of the workload of the Commission owing to a large number of submissions already made and the number of submissions which are expected to be made in the future,

Recognizing the need to ensure that the Commission can effectively perform the functions entrusted to it under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ("the Convention"), while maintaining its high level of quality and expertise,

Recalling paragraph 58 of General Assembly resolution 64/71, which stressed the urgent need for States Parties to the Convention to take appropriate and prompt steps that would allow the Commission to consider the submissions in a timely, efficient and effective manner,

Noting with appreciation the efforts undertaken by the Commission in this regard,

Recognizing in this context the burden, including the financial burden, being placed on States, in particular developing States, whose experts are serving on the Commission,

Bearing in mind the legal framework of the work of the Commission, provided for in article 76 of and annex II to the Convention,

Bearing in mind also that article 77 of the Convention provides that rights of the coastal State over the continental shelf do not depend on occupation, effective or notional, or on any express proclamation,

Noting with appreciation the work done by the Secretariat, especially in the preparation of document SPLOS/208,

Welcoming the work done by the Informal Working Group, facilitated by the Bureau of the nineteenth Meeting of States Parties relating to the workload of the Commission,

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1. *Requests* the Commission to consider adopting the following measures as appropriate on an urgent and priority basis, from now until the twenty-second Meeting of States Parties, within existing resources, and in coordination with the Secretariat, as required:

(a) Flexible size of subcommissions, taking into account the relevant provisions of annex II to the Convention and the rules of procedure of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf;[1]

(b) Extended meetings of subcommissions;

(c) More frequent meetings of subcommissions;

(d) Flexible arrangements of plenary and subcommission meetings;

(e) Subcommissions may be tasked to examine more than one submission, as far as practicable, and where capacity allows;

(f) Remote working by the members of the Commission with the consent of the submitting State;

2. *Decides* to continue to address through the Informal Working Group, facilitated by the Bureau of the Meeting of States Parties, the issue of the workload of the Commission, in particular to assess further measures that may be necessary, including, inter alia, the possibility of a full-time Commission, and that the Informal Working Group report on its recommendations to the twenty-first Meeting of States Parties in 2011;

3. *Also decides* to make an assessment in 2011 on the progress achieved with a view to considering what measures beyond 2012 may be required to help reduce the projected timeline in the workload of the Commission;

4. *Urges* the nominating States to fulfil their obligations with respect to the members of the Commission nominated by them in accordance with article 2, paragraph 5, of annex II to the Convention;

5. *Calls upon* those States which are in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund set up for the purpose of defraying the cost of participation of members of the Commission from developing States in the meetings of the Commission, and, in this regard, welcomes recent contributions made or pledged by States parties;

6. *Encourages* States parties which are in a position to do so to consider the possibility of providing medical coverage to the members of the Commission nominated by them while performing Commission duties in New York;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide, at the request of the Coordinator of the Informal Working Group, information on the standard costs as well as financial and other implications of all options or proposals under consideration in the Informal Working Group;

8. *Decides* to take up matters related to the workload of the Commission at the twenty-first Meeting of States Parties under the item entitled "Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf: workload of the Commission".

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[1] CLCS/40/Rev.1.